

**ABSTRACT**

The present invention enables software and firmware downloads to high definition television (HDTV) appliances via a television terminal. A download control message received at the terminal may comprise: (i) a first version identifier identifying a version of an available software or firmware download; (ii) a first type identifier identifying a particular type of HDTV appliance for which the download is intended; and (iii) a download object containing the software or firmware to be downloaded. The terminal obtains a second type identifier from the HDTV appliance that identifies a type of the HDTV appliance. If the type identifiers correspond, the terminal obtains a second version identifier from the HDTV appliance, which identifies a current version of software or firmware of the HDTV appliance. If the version identifiers do not correspond, the terminal may pass the download object to the HDTV appliance.

November 5, 2003